Outcome of WTO and world Economic Forum Conference

296. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the outcome of the W.T.O. Conference held in Seattle of America from November, 30 to December 3, 1999; and

(b) what is the outcome of the World Economic Forum Conference held at Davos in the last week of January, 2000?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Due to lack of consensus amongst the WTO members, it was decided to suspend the work of the Seattle Ministerial Conference of WTO without any Ministerial Declaration. The Chairperson of the Conference requested the Director General of WTO to hold consultations with member countries to discuss creative ways to bridge the remaining areas in which consensus did not exist and prepare the way for a successful conclusion.

(b) The World Economic Forum meeting provides a venue for informal discussions between world leaders on matters of current topical interest relating to finance, business and economics. The main focus of discussion in the current year related to globalization. India had made use of this forum to project the enormous opportunities and very conducive atmosphere as exists in India for Foreign Direct Investments.

Legislation for trade-related intellectual property rights

297. SHRI RAMACHANDRAIAH RUMANDLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether legislations pertaining to the Trade-related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) have since been finalised for introduction; and

(b) if so, the action taken to protect our plant varieties and substances of the geographical origin in India?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) Under the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), India has to meet certain obligations by 1.1.2000. The legislations regarding trademarks, copyrights and geographical indications have already been passed by the Parliament in the Winter Session 1999. A Bill for amendment to the Patents Act, 1970 and a Bill for providing protection to plant varieties and farmers rights, were introduced in the Winter Session of the Parliament in 1999 and are before the respective Joint Committees of the Parliament. The legislation relating to Semi-conductor Integrated Circuits Layout Design was also introduced and is now before the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and